

Cooking your Catch

Campfire (or BBQ) Trout

Ingredients

trout - cleaned
1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter
salt and pepper to taste
herbs such as parsley, sage or thyme

Make a long deep dish out of foil, making sure you have enough foil to fold over and seal on top. Place the fish in the foil dish. Add the butter and your preferred herbs. Seal the top of the foil so that no liquid can escape. Bake on a grate over a hot bed of coals, turning frequently.

Pan Fried Trout

Ingredients

fresh trout - cleaned, scaled, and filleted cooking oil
flour
lemon wedges (optional)

Dredge the trout filets through the flour. Heat the cooking oil in a frying pan. Fry the trout until golden brown on both sides. Use care when turning the filets over so they don't stick to the pan or break apart. Serve hot with lemon wedges.

Baked Trout or Catfish

Ingredients

fresh fish - cleaned, scaled and filleted
1/4 cup milk
seasoned bread crumbs or crushed corn flakes
2 tablespoons melted butter

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Dip the fillets in the milk, then in the bread crumbs or crushed corn flakes to coat. Place the fish in a baking pan. Baste the fish two times with the melted butter while it is baking. Bake until firm and golden.

Fried Catfish

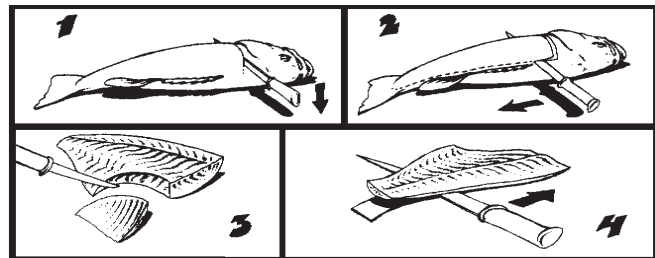
Ingredients

fresh catfish - cleaned, skinned, and filleted
cooking oil
seasoned white cornmeal
lemon wedges (optional)

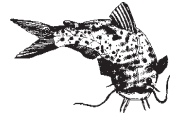
Cut the catfish filets into chunks and dredge them through the cornmeal. Heat the cooking oil in a frying pan. Deep fry the catfish until golden brown. Serve hot with lemon wedges.

Filleting your catch

To fillet a fish, lay it on its side on a flat surface. Cut the fish behind its gills and pectoral fin down to, but not through, the backbone. Without removing the knife, turn the blade and cut through the ribs toward the tail. Use the fish's backbone to guide you. Turn the fish over and repeat the steps.



Then, with the skin side down, insert the knife blade about a 1/2 inch from the tail. Gripping this tail part firmly, put the blade between the skin and the meat at an angle. Wash each fillet in cold water. Pat dry with a clean cloth or paper towel. The fillets are ready to cook or freeze.



After the Catch...

A fish that you plan to eat must be kept fresh. If you don't plan to keep a fish, free it quickly without harming it. If a fish can't be kept alive, it should be cleaned and placed on ice to avoid spoilage.

Releasing a Fish

To release a fish, keep it in the water if you can. Handle it carefully with a wet hand so it can be freed unharmed. If it's a fish without sharp teeth like a bass, hold its lower lip between your thumb and index finger. If it has sharp teeth, carefully hold it around the body while you remove the hook. Never hold a fish by the eyes or gills if it will be released.

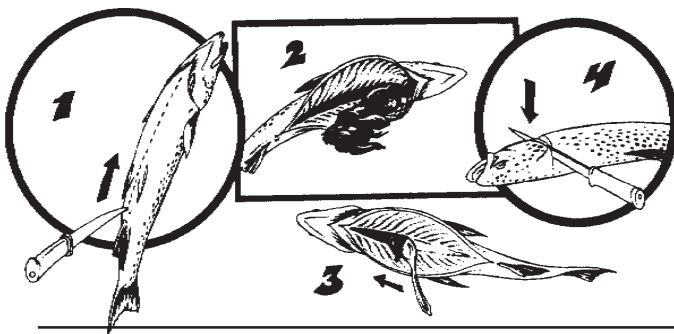
If the fish is hooked deeply and you can't easily remove the hook, cut the line to release the fish. The hook will rust, dissolve, or work its way loose.

If a fish loses consciousness, try to revive it by gently moving it forward and backward so water moves through its gills. When the fish begins to struggle and can swim, let it go.

Cleaning a Fish

Ask an adult to teach you how to use a knife to dress a fish so nobody gets hurt.

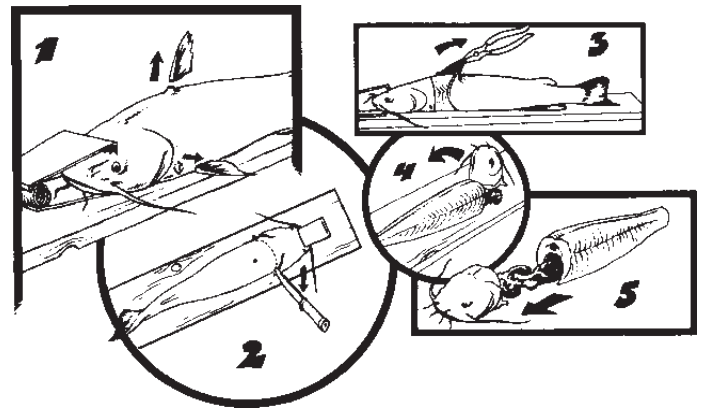
First insert the knife tip into the fish's anus and move the blade up along the belly, cutting to the head. Keep the knife blade shallow so you don't puncture the intestines.



Then, spread the body open and remove all of the entrails. Some fish have a kidney by the backbone. You can remove it by scraping it out with a spoon or your thumbnail. Cut off the head and rinse the fish in clean water. To keep a dressed fish fresh, surround it with ice in an ice chest or cooler. As the ice melts it should drain from the cooler. Never store fish in ice water.

Skinning

To skin a catfish or bullhead, hold its head firmly on a flat surface with a clamp. For safety, it is a good idea to snip off a catfish's spines before skinning. Then, cut through the skin behind the head and the pectoral fins. Use pliers to remove the skin from the body, pulling from the head toward the tail. Grasp the head



of the fish with one hand and the body with the other. Break the backbone at the head. Pull the head and guts away from the skinned body. After you wash the fish in clean water, it's ready for cooking. You remove the fish's bones just before you eat it.